

Michigan Wheel of Fortune Cancellation

by Larry Rausch

Introduction:

This article details those towns using the Wheel of Fortune postmark that I have identified for the state of Michigan.

In the November 2005 U.S. Cancellation Club News issue, Arthur Beane announced a project to produce a monograph on the Wheel of Fortune cancels. I've taken up the task to complete this monograph.

Here is where you can help... by providing any additional covers that I have not identified and forward photo scans of these Covers to me at stonywoods840@gmail.com . All state towns and duplicates would also be appreciated.

Background:

In 1880 the F.P. Hammond Co. of Aurora, Illinois, introduced the canceller (Fig. 1). Today this fancy rubber canceller is called **Wheel of Fortune (WOF)**. The highly detailed stamper was made possible with the invention of vulcanized rubber. The Peerless Vulcanizer shown on the 1898 cover below (Fig. 2) may have been the type of machine to make the Wheel of Fortune device.

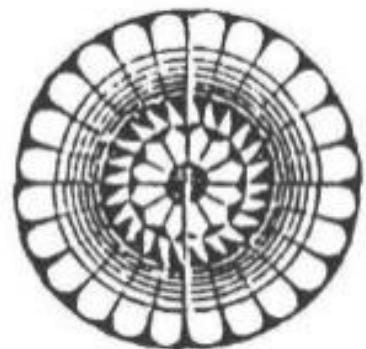


Figure 1: A Typical "wheel of fortune" Cancellation (enlarged to show detail)



Figure 2. Illustrated advertising cover for the "Peerless Vulcanizers" which made rubber handstamp devices, like the Wheel of Fortune killer, possible.

The first advertisement for the WOF appeared in the January 1881 U.S. Official Postal Guide (Fig. 3). Although this ad depicts postmarks dating in the 1870's, the earliest WOF postmark found to date is February 26, 1880 from New Lisbon, Wisconsin. The earliest Michigan cover is dated June 6, 1883 from Caseville, Michigan (Fig.4).

(Note: In the advertisement under "Best Offer", this Canceller and kit cost \$3.00.)

"WHEEL OF FORTUNE"

POST OFFICE SUPPLIES

ESTABLISHED 1872.

WE ARE HEADQUARTERS

For the most complete line of articles used by P. M.'s and their Clerks.

Engraved Letter Headings,
" Note Headings,
Stamp Ribbons (all colors),
Money Order Daters,
Post-Office Daters,
Registered Letter Daters,
Received Daters,
Patent Inking Pads,
P. O. Canceling Ink (*by Express*),
P. O. Rubber Canceling Corks,
Twine Cutters,
Steel and Rubber Stamp Racks,
Coin Detectors,
Paper Weights,
Letter and Package Scales,
Check Protectors,
Gem Type Case,

THE BEST OFFER YET.

One RUBBER P. O. Dater and Canceller, Ink Powder, and Pads, Dates for ten years in Walnut case with tweezers, and all the single line stamps needed in a **UNCLAIMED** Post Office, this style type:

By mail, postage paid, on receipt of price, \$3.00.

PROOFS FROM POSTMASTERS.

Your Quarterly Record received, and I like it very much. JOHN CECIL, P. M., California, Md.
The \$5 Outfit ordered by me was duly received this evening. They are all A No. 1 articles, and give entire satisfaction. — JAS. S. HARING, P. M., Orangeburg, N. Y.
The Rubber Stamps, Note and Bill Heads, came to hand all right and meet with favor with those who have examined them, for cheapness, neatness, and durability. — T. W. LITTLE, P. M., Picture Rocks, Pa.
I have been using one of your Stamps and Pads for the last year and it gives satisfaction. — W. S. BOWEN, P. M., Sheffield, Iowa.
I received my Note and Letter Heads, Dater, etc., all O. K. Am satisfied with your job. It far exceeds my expectations. WM. J. KING, P. M., Maxville, Mo.
The Dater received, and I am well pleased with it. — CHAS. COON, P. M., Albion, Idaho.
Your Box Record received, and is all O. K. — J. W. FROW, P. M., Fort Madison, Iowa.
The Pads ordered came to-day. I am very much pleased with them. — ED. S. MENARD, P. M., St. Genevieve, Mo.

Illustrated Catalogue of Post Office Supplies sent free to Postmasters only. For samples of Note and Letter Headings send 6 cts. Address F. P. HAMMOND & CO., Aurora Illinois.

No. 529.



No. 530.



No. 531.



No. 532.



Fig. 3



Figure 4. This postmark from "Caseville, Huron Co., Michigan June 6, 1883" represents the earliest example of a WOF marking from Michigan.

I show the seven different cancellations found on WOF covers (Fig. 5)--six duplex and one with only the WOF die, coupled with many different circular date stamps as shown in the Shelby, Michigan cover (Fig. 6).

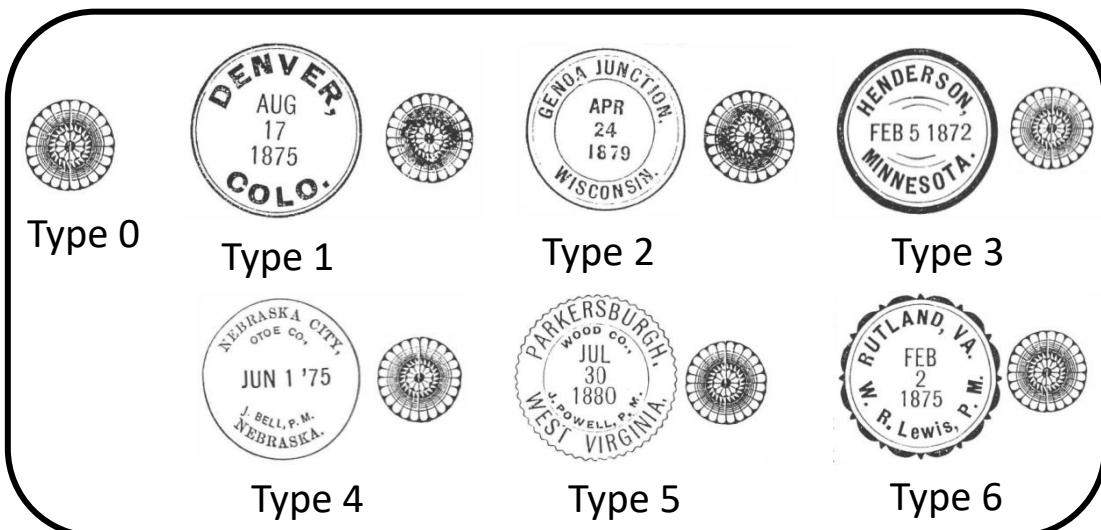


Fig. 5



Figure 6. An example of a type 0 WOF postmark From Shelby, Michigan May 10, 1884 to Indiana

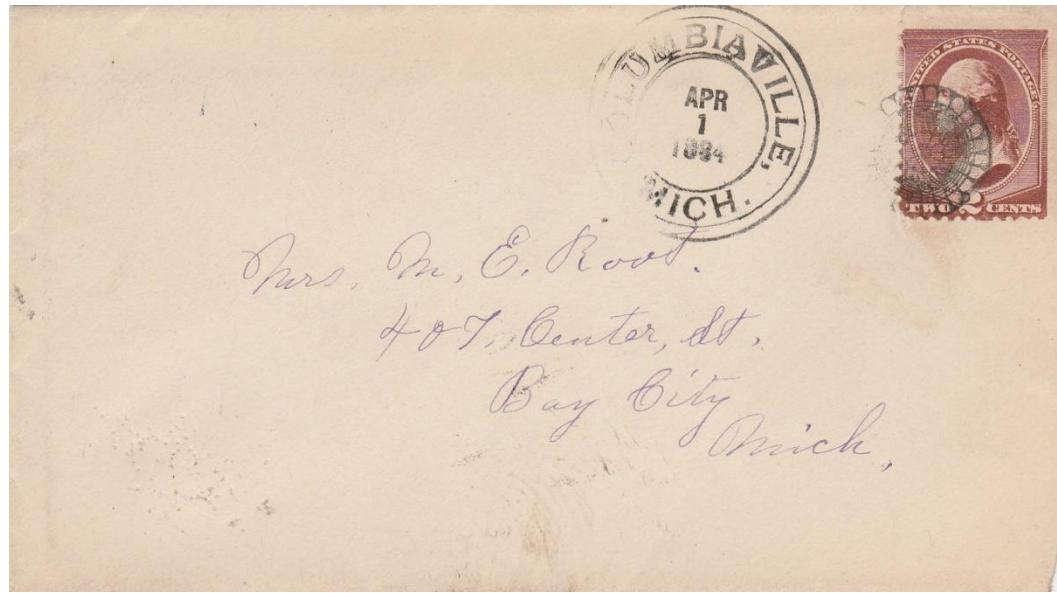
The 1995 book “Cancellations and Killers of the Banknote Era 1870-1894” by James M. Cole listed a total of 353 US towns using the WOF cancel; for Michigan he listed 12 towns. Also the Kelleher Auction of the 2011 Arthur Beane sale had 26 Michigan WOF covers listed. To date, 29 different Michigan towns have been identified (Fig. 7). Some of these Wheel of Fortune Postmark covers follow this article.

Reference:

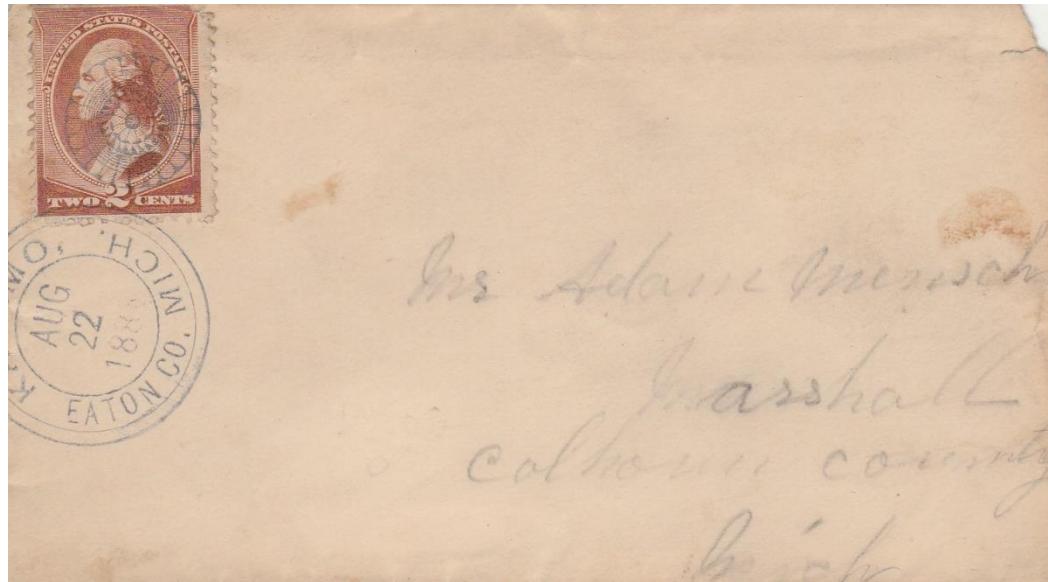
- 1.) Cancellations and Killers of the Banknote Era 1870-1894 James M Cole
- 2.)US Cancellation Club News
- 3.)Kelleher Auctions sale #623 January 14, 2011 Arthur Beane

				Usage		Postmark Includes		Cover
count		Town	Photo	Range	type	County		Date
1	MI	Bankers **	p	1894	3	Hillsdale County		94-1-27
2	MI	Baraga *				Baraga County		
3	MI	Berlamont **				Van Buren County		
4	MI	Carlton Center **				Barry County		
5	MI	Caseville * **	p	1883	2	Huron County	Co	83-6-6
6	MI	Cedar Creek	p	1887	1	Barry County	Co	87-2-22
7	MI	Columbiaville * **	p	1884	2	Lapeer County		84-4-1
8	MI	Downington **				Sanilac County		
9	MI	Ferrysburgh **				Ottawa County		
10	MI	Flint				Genesee County		
11	MI	Fruitport * **				Muskegan County		
12	MI	Gowen **				Montcalm County		
13	MI	Hartwellville * **				Shiawassee County		
14	MI	Kalamo **	p	1885	2	Eaton County		85-8-22
15	MI	Lake Linden * **	p	1885	0	Houghton County		86-12-21
16	MI	Luzerne **				Oscoda County		
17	MI	Mancelona * **				Antrim County		
18	MI	Morrice **				Shiawassee County		
19	MI	Onekama **				Manistee County		
20	MI	Oxford	p	1886-7	1	Oakland County		86-7-17
	MI	Oxford		1886-7		Oakland County		86-9-25
	MI	Oxford	p	1886-7		Oakland County		86-11-4
	MI	Oxford * **	p	1886-7		Oakland County		87-1-20
21	MI	Port Austin * **	p	1887	0	Huron County	Co	87-4-18
22	MI	Praireville **	p	1885	2	Barry County	Co	85-10-29
23	MI	Riga * **				Lenawee County		
24	MI	Seney **				Schoolcraft County		
25	MI	Shelby * **	p	1883-4	0	Oceana County	Co	84-5-10
26	MI	South Allen **				Hillsdale County		
27	MI	Ubly **				Huron County		
28	MI	Union Pier **				Berrien County		
29	MI	Woodland * **				Barry County		
		* Cole list ** 2011 Beane sale						

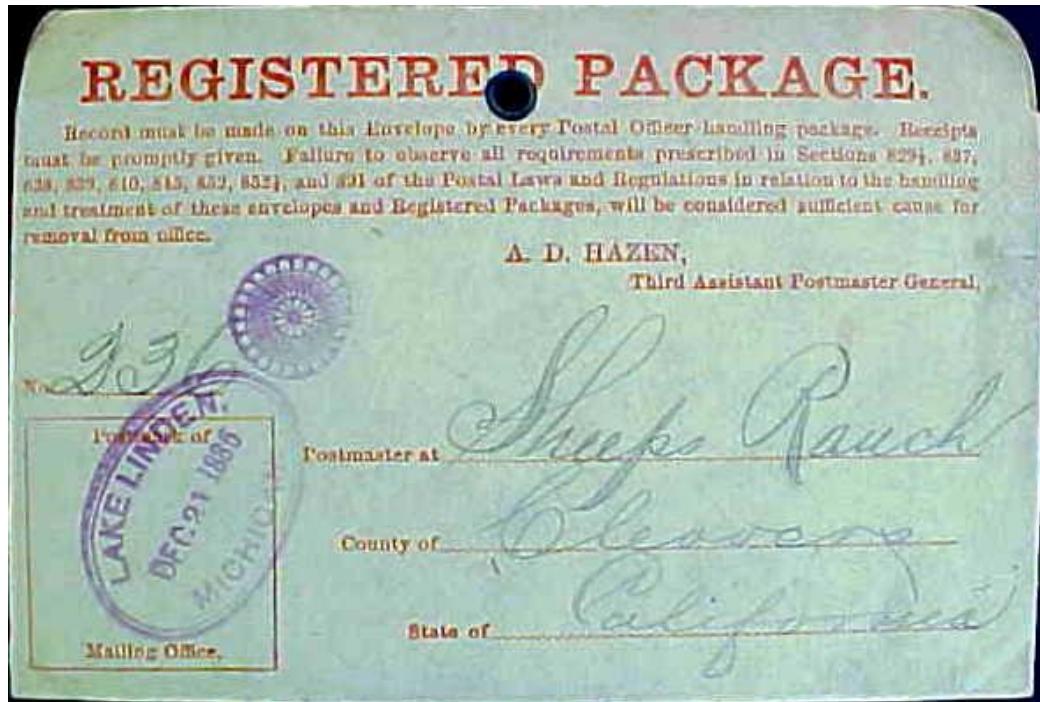
Figure 7. List of Michigan post offices that used Wheel of Fortune cancels.



Columbiaville, Mich.
Lapeer Co.
April 1, 1884



Kalamazoo, Mich.
Eaton Co.
Aug. 22, 1885



Lake Linden, Mich.
Houghton Co.
Dec. 21, 1886



Oxford, Mich.
Oakland Co.
July 17, 1886



Port Austin, Mich.
Huron Co.
April 18, 1887



Prairievile, Mich.
Barry Co.
Oct. 29, 1885